

REMARKS

Claims 31-64 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 31-42 are cancelled and claims 43-45, 50-52, 55-56, 58-59, and 63-64 are amended. No new claims are added.

Applicants thank the examiner for the allowance of claims 44-57 and the indication of allowability of claims 43 and 58-64. Claims 43 and 58 have been amended accordingly. Claims 44-45, 50-52, 55-56, 59, and 63-64 have been amended to correct minor informalities and conforms the application to customary U.S. practice. In view of the following comments, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 43-64.

Claim Objections

Claims 31 and 58 stand objected to based upon informalities. Claim 31 has now been cancelled. Claim 58 has been amended to clarify the claim. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the objections to claims 31 and 58.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 31-42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,188,483 to Ettemeyer. Applicants have cancelled claims 31-42. Therefore, the rejections of claims 31-42 are now moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 31-42.

Allowable Subject Matter

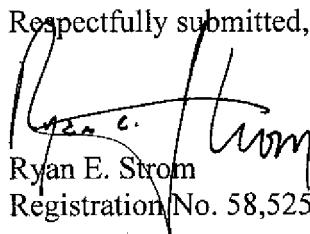
Claims 44-57 were allowed. Claim 43 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 58-64 were indicated as allowable if rewritten to overcome the Examiner's objections.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indications of allowance. Claim 43 has been rewritten to incorporation the limitations of claims 31 and 39-42. Claim 58 has been rewritten to not mix both method and means for limitations. Therefore, claims 43 and 58 are allowable. Claims 59-64 depend from claim 58 and are therefore also allowable for at the least reasons set forth for claim 58.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan E. Strom
Registration No. 58,525

Customer No. 24113
Patterson, Thuente, Skaar & Christensen, P.A.
4800 IDS Center
80 South 8th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-2100
Telephone: (612) 349-3011